



459
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BATMAN



ROUGHER

GRANT
BREYFOGLE
MITCHELL



SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

WHAT'S ON IN GOTHAM

MOVIES



CONTINUED

ABC CINEMA
HIT OF THE YEAR!
PRE-TEEN KARATE COCKROACHES
G

SCREEN 1
FANGS, THE DEVIL DOES
PET KILLER
PG

ODEON CINEMA
WHERE SKULKS THE SKELETON
R

GO-GANG THEATRE
X

GOTHAM CINEMA
STARRING TINA LA BOMBE AND THE BAD TIME GIRLS
PLATINUM DEATH R

Classic Cinema
The Mark of ORRO
G

...WHO CARES WHAT PICTURE WE SEE?

TRAVEL
Be among the first to ch...
PLAYING QUICHMAN TRAVEL
FAR EAST

Cruises
EMPORIUM TRAVEL

BOB'S NEVADA
EVERY SUNDAY
TUESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY
SUNDAY
\$27
\$49

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NORM BREYFOGLE
Pencils

STEVE MITCHELL
Inks

ADRIENNE ROY
Colors

TODD KLEIN
Letters

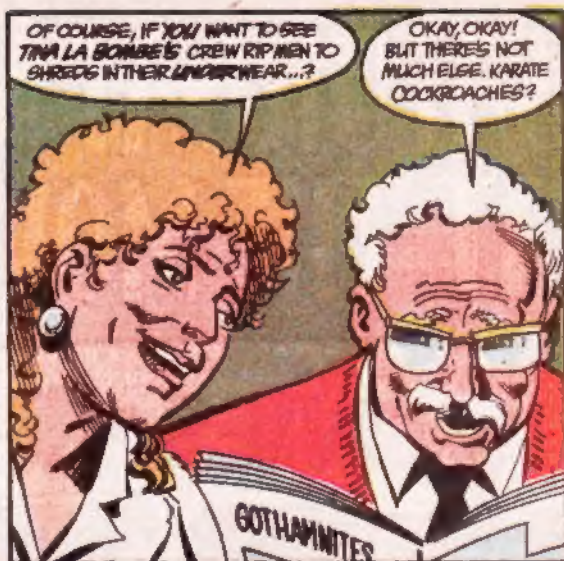
KELLEY PUCKETT
Asst. Ed.

DENNIS O'NEIL
Editor

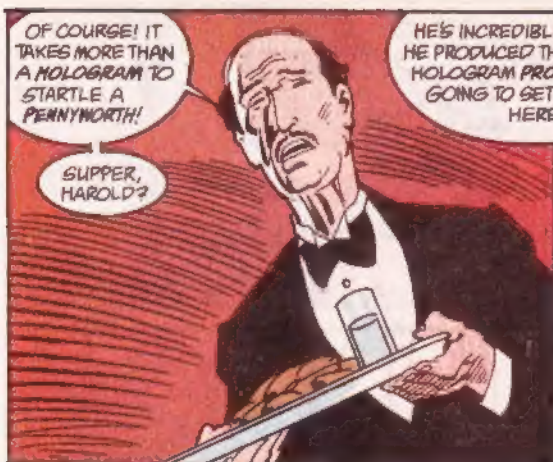
BOB KANE
BATMAN creator

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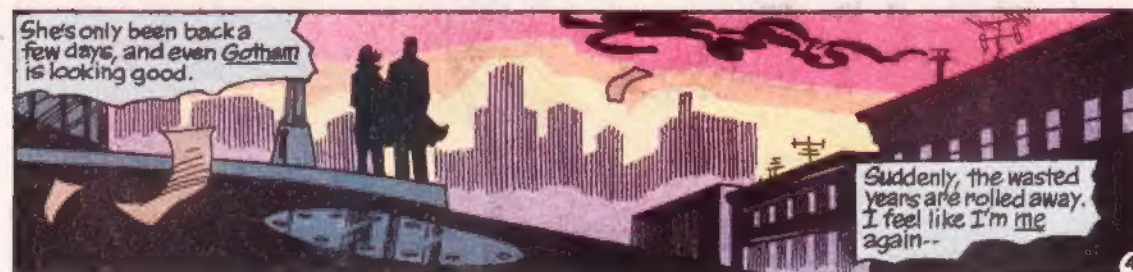
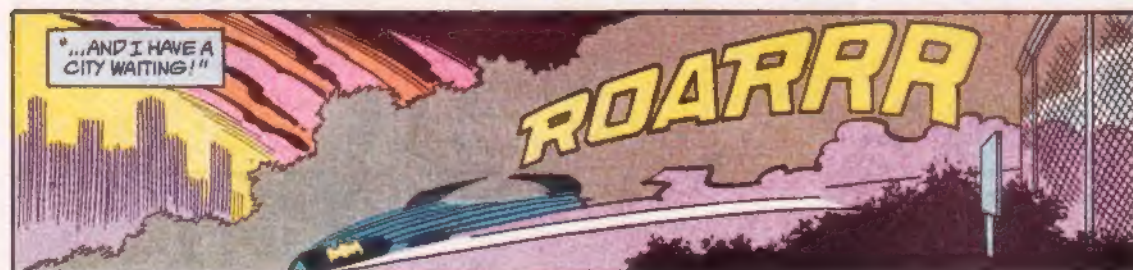
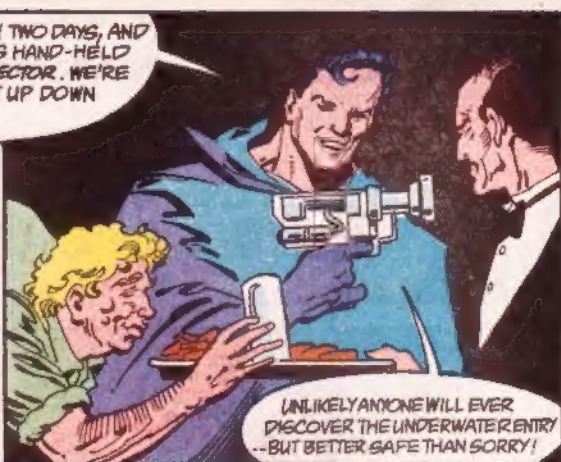
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HE'S INCREDIBLE! TWO DAYS, AND HE PRODUCED THIS HAND-HELD HOLOGRAM PROJECTOR. WE'RE GOING TO SET IT UP DOWN HERE.







AW, C-C-COME ON, GUYS! I'M ON VACATION--!

SHUT UP! HAND OVER THE WALLET!

'LESS Y'D RATHER WE CUT IT OUTCHER ROCKET!

SPADES MILLIGAN AND FREAK CURTIS: TWO-TIME LOSERS. CRACK ADDICTS--AND THEY'RE HURTING!

B-BUT IT'S ALL THE MONEY I HAVE...!

THEY'RE ON A HAIR-TRIGGER. CAN'T RISK DIVING STRAIGHT IN--

NOW IT'S ALL THE MONEY WE HAVE!

LET'S ROUND THE GEEK ANYWAY, SPADES!

MAGNESIUM FLARE'LL GIVE ME THE EDGE--

WHAT THE HELL--?

FWMZZZ

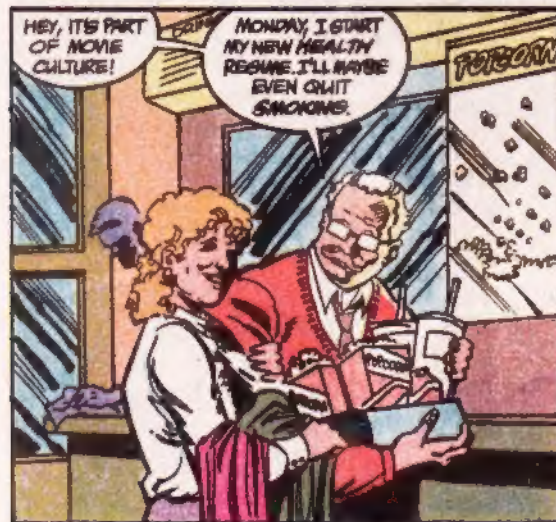
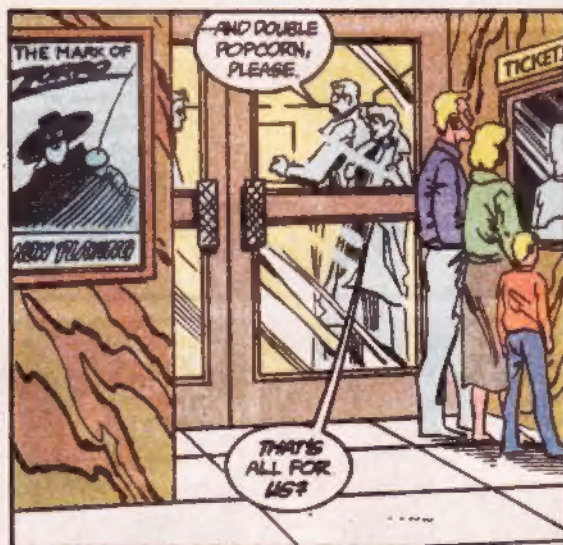
CLUNK

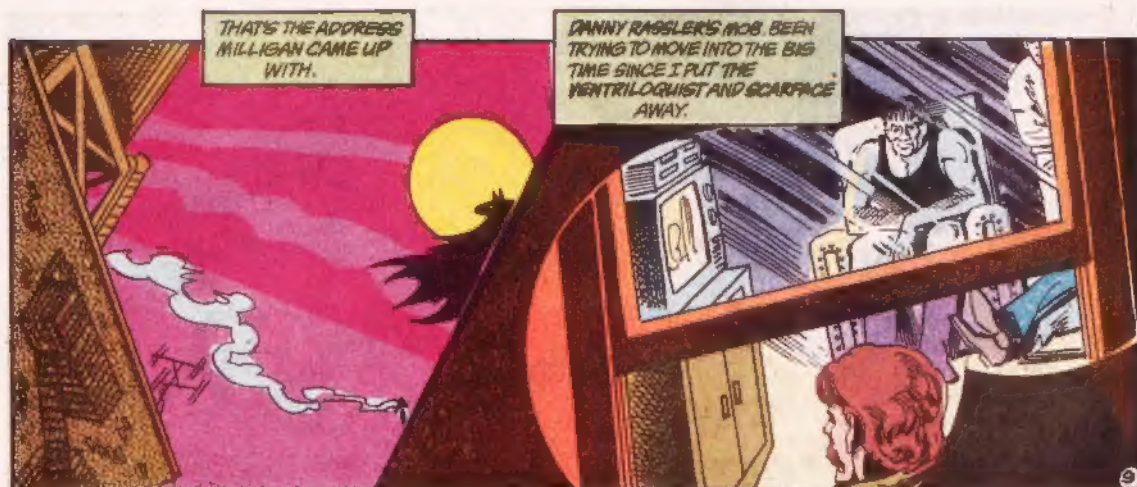
WHNKK!

MY EYES! I CAN'T SEE--!

AAAAH!







HAVEN'T SUCCEEDED YET--

PAF

TLNK

ZWEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

—AND THEY'RE NOT GOING TO TONIGHT!

DIE, MORTAL DIE!

WAY TO GO, SKELLY! RIP 'IM!

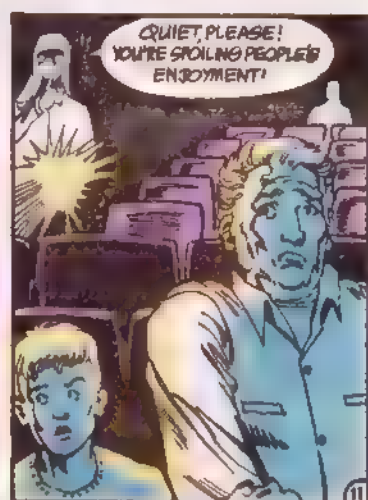
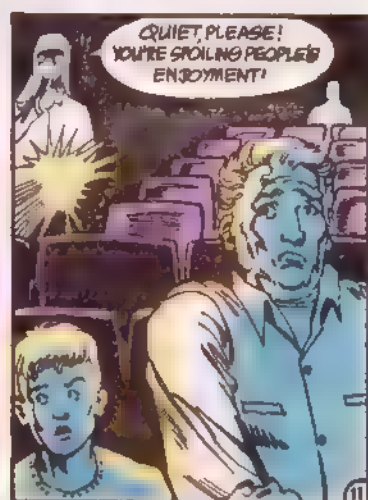
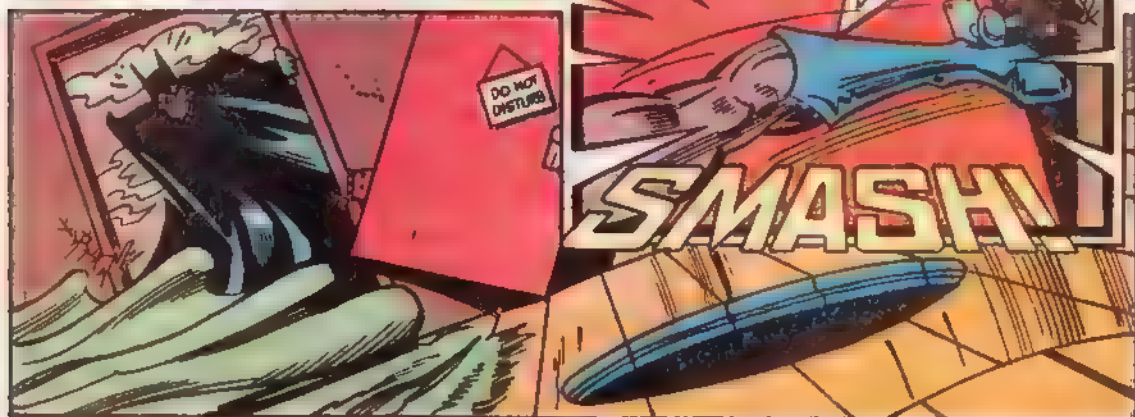
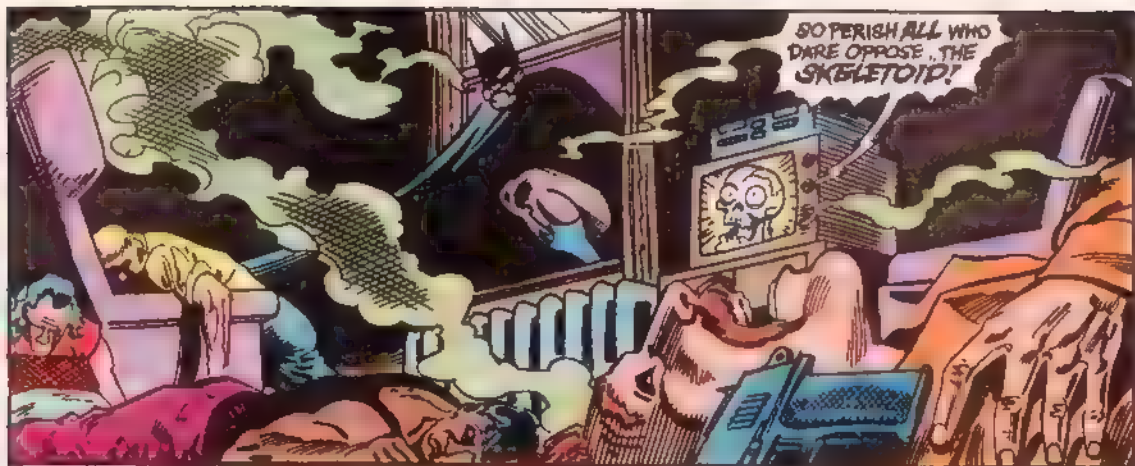
'S NOT BAD, NAME PIRATE COPY, AN' IT ONLY COST A TWO-HIT PHAL!

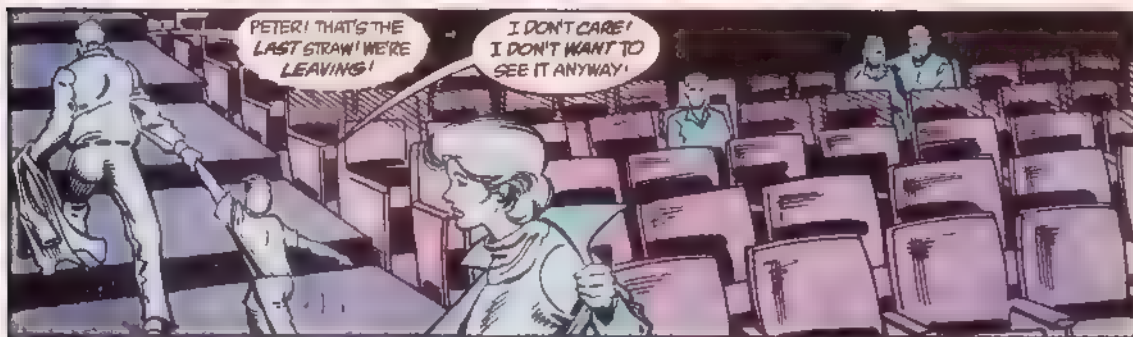
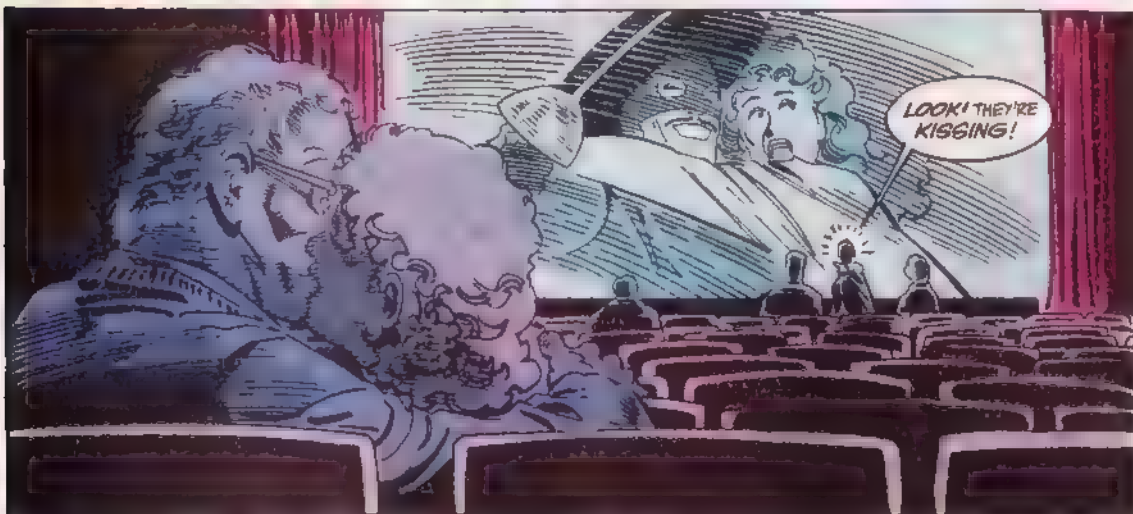
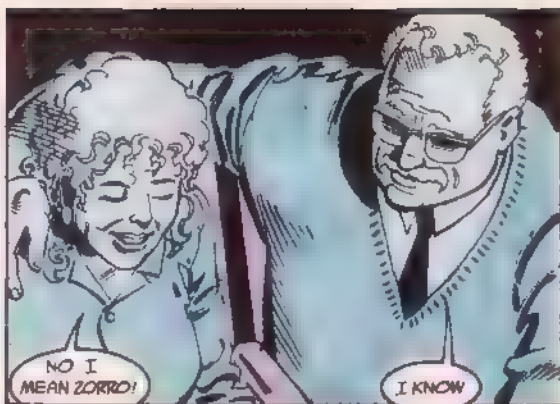
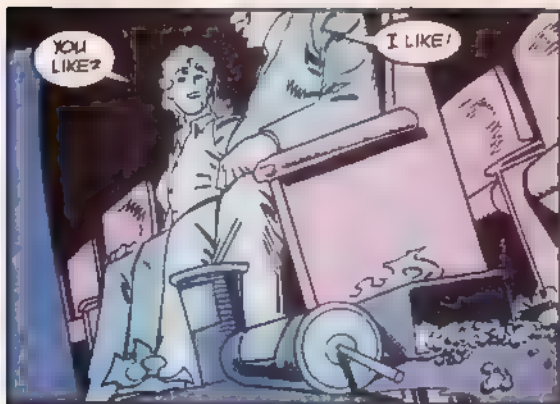
CHIEZ! WE'RE UNDER ATTACK--!

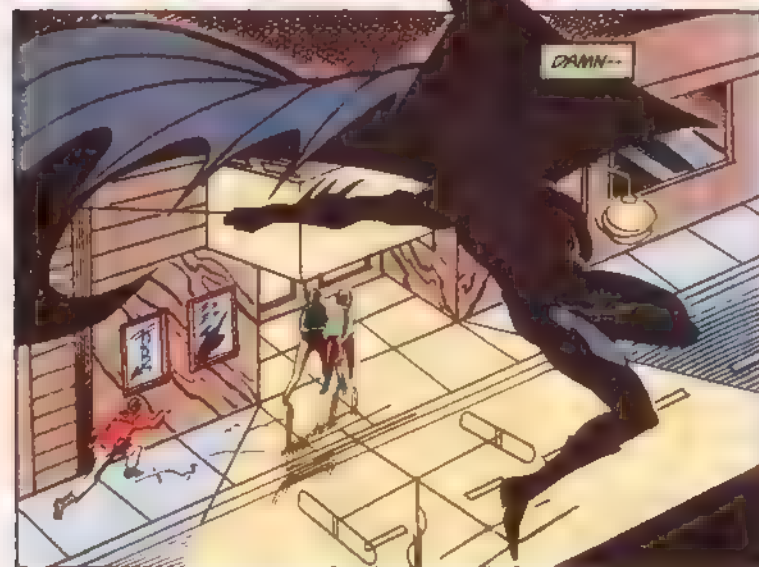
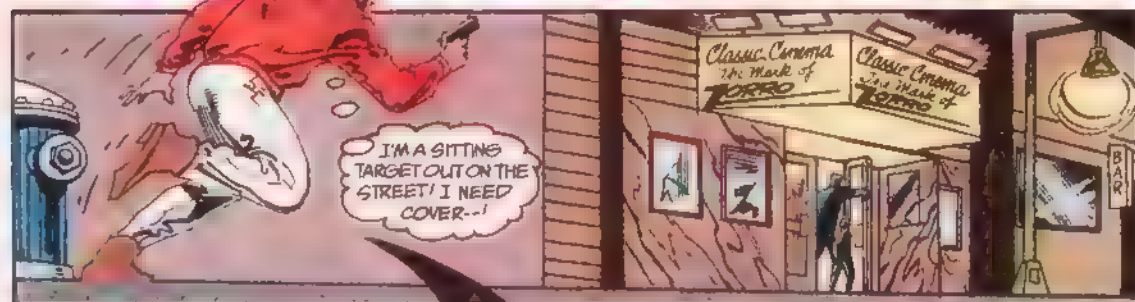
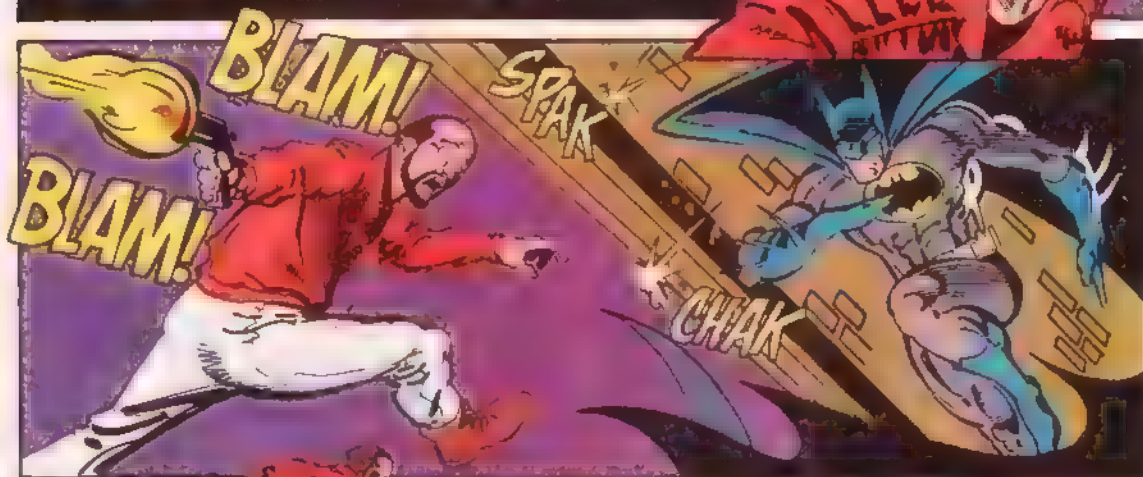
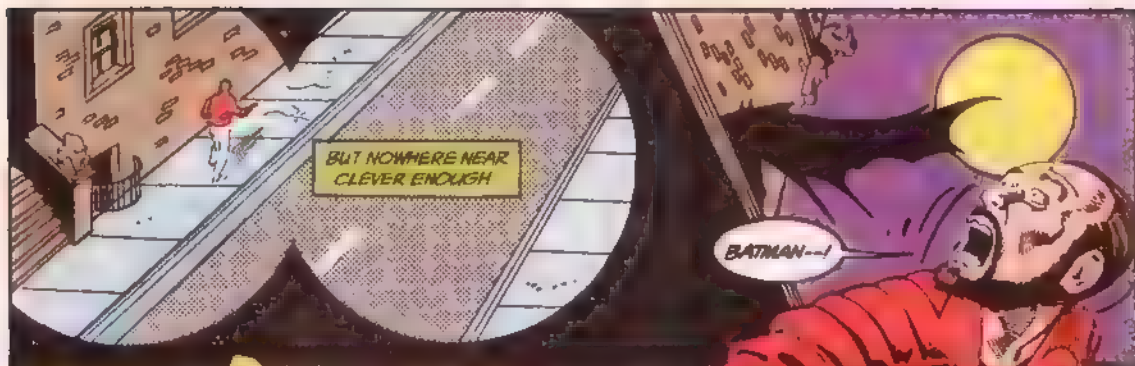
G-BAG!

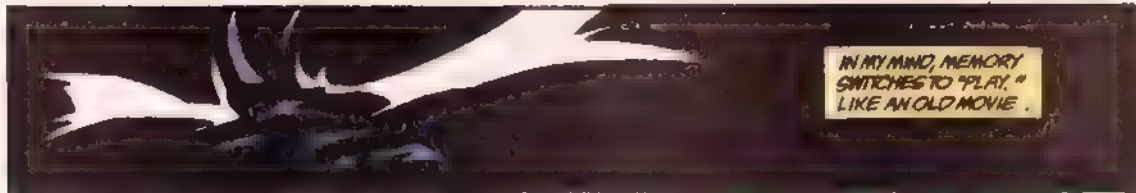
I...I CAN'T...
UHHUUUUH!

KSH









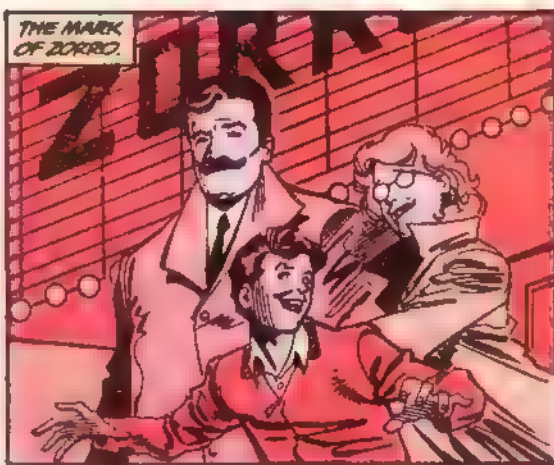
IN MY MIND, MEMORY
SWITCHES TO "PLAY,"
LIKE AN OLD MOVIE.



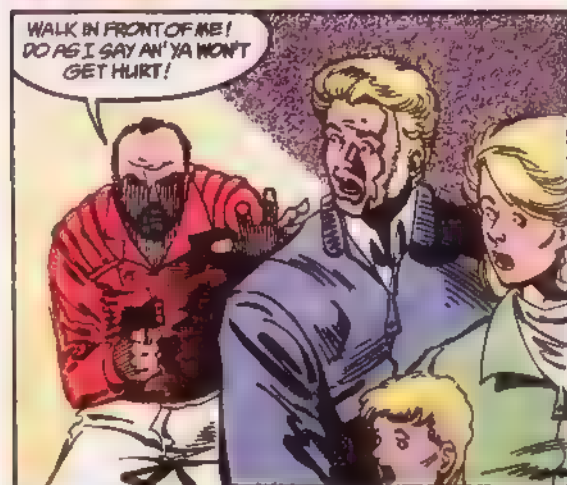
YOU! COME
HERE!

M-MY
GOD! I--

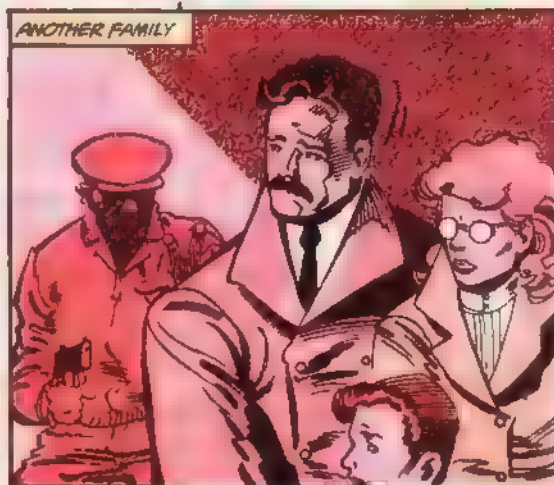
DO IT
OR DIE!



THE MARK
OF ZORRO.



WALK IN FRONT OF ME!
DO AS I SAY AN' YA WON'T
GET HURT!



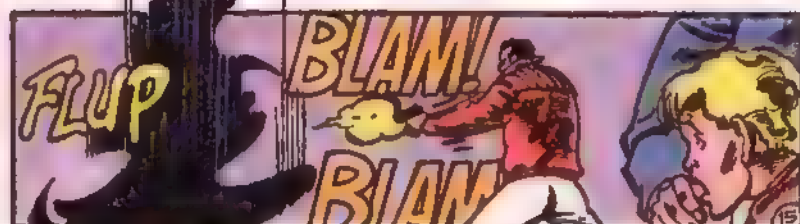
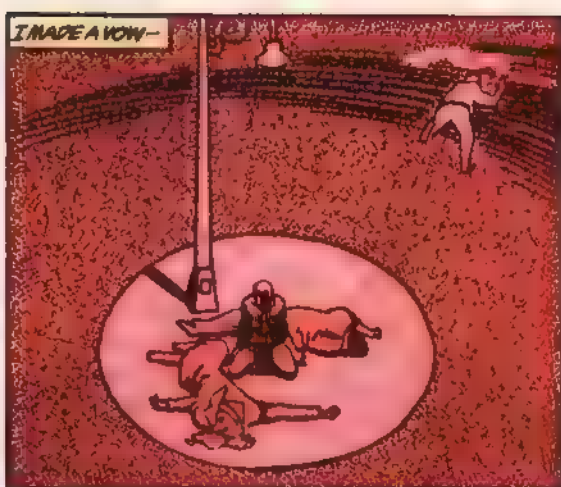
ANOTHER FAMILY

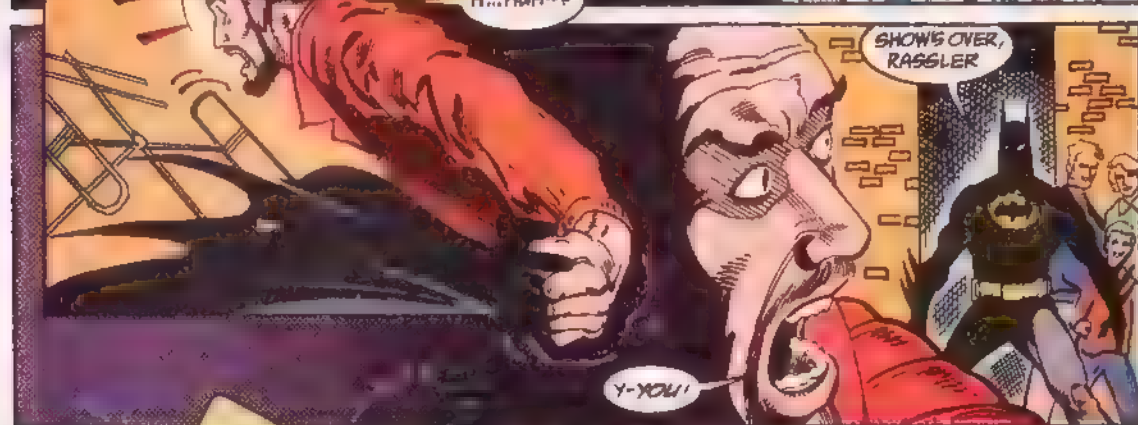


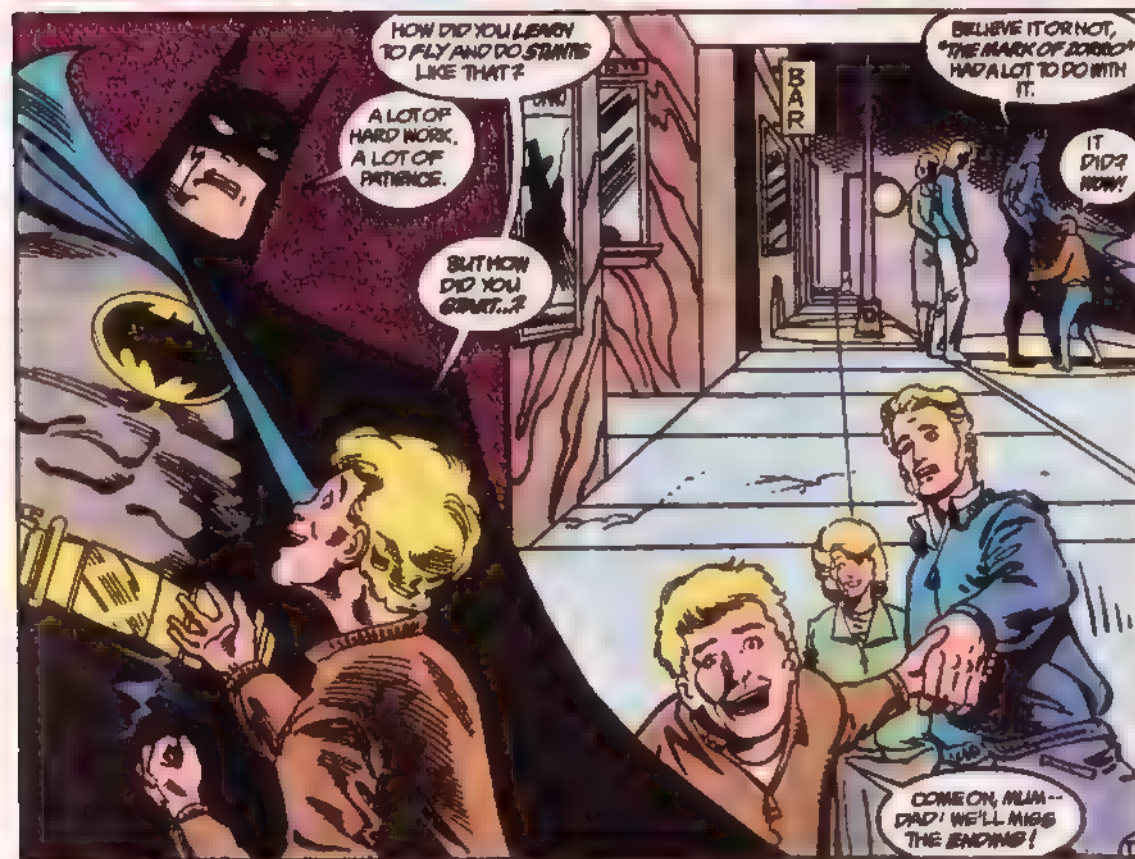
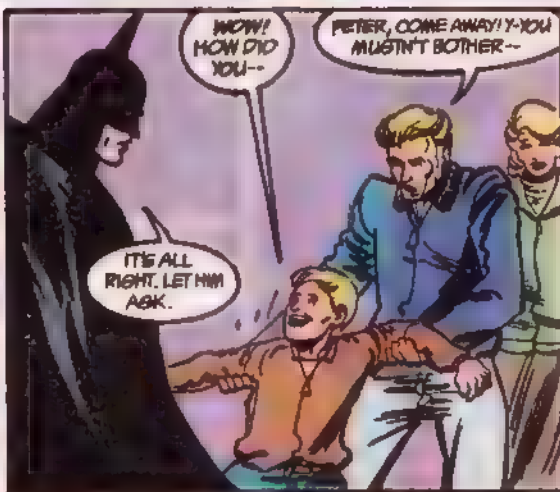
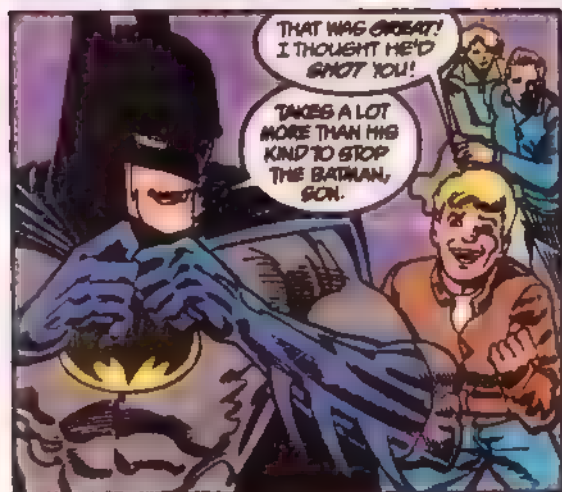
BATMAN!



MY FAMILY



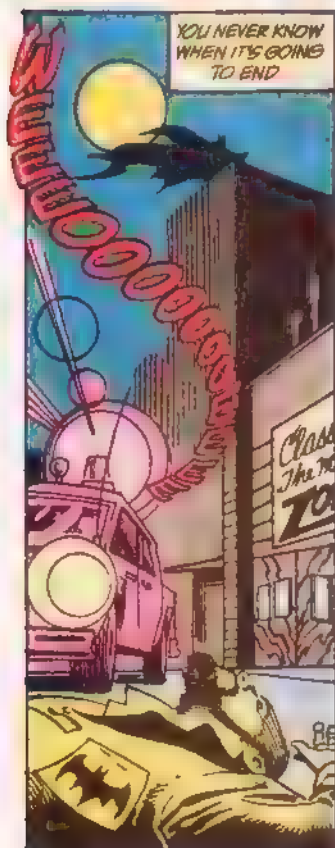




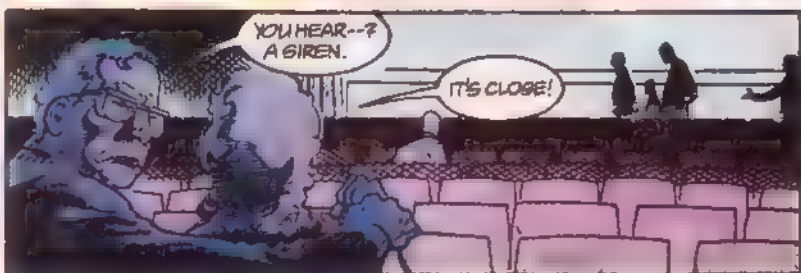


THE MARK OF ZORRO.

TREASURE EACH OTHER... WHILE YOU CAN



YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN IT'S GOING TO END



YOU HEAR--? A GIREN.

IT'S CLOSE!



EXCUSE ME, MISS! WE HAVE TO RUSH!

WHAT IN HECKS GOING ON HERE TONIGHT?



NEED ANY HELP THERE, OFFICERS?

COMMISSIONER GORDON!



NO, SIR--MA AM DANNY RASLER--COURTESY THE BATMAN

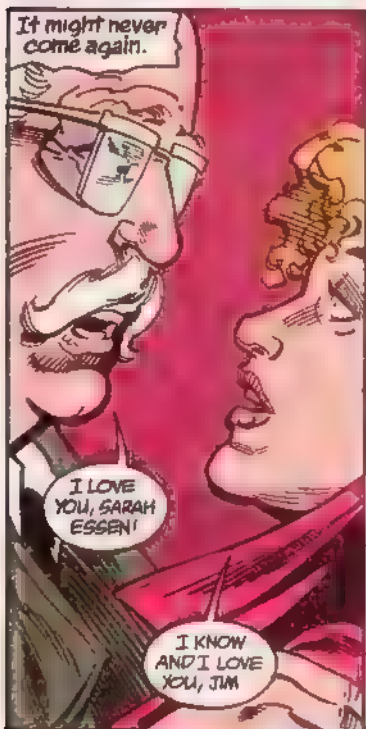
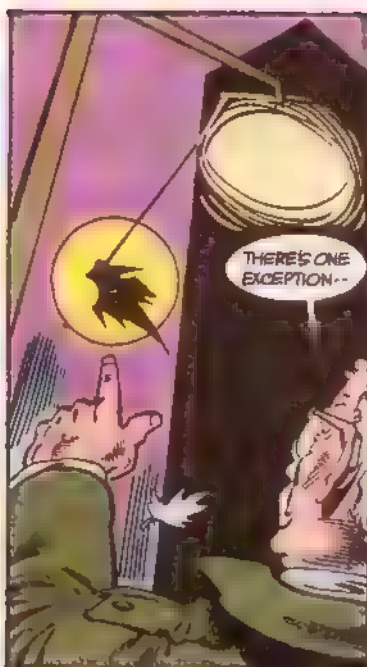
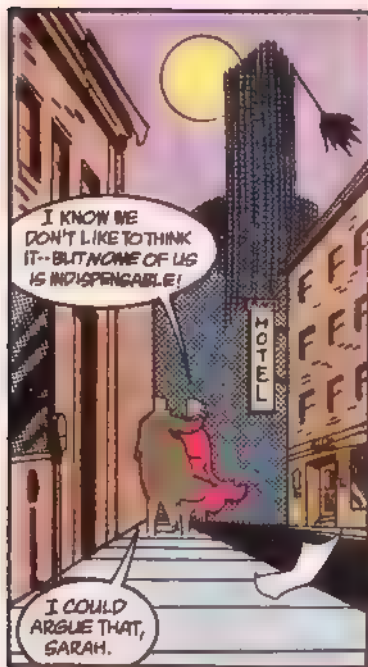
BETTER SEND A UNIT 'ROUND TO HIS--

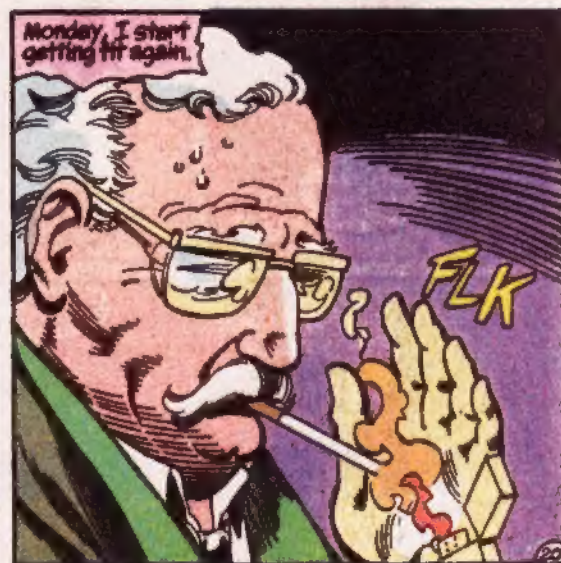
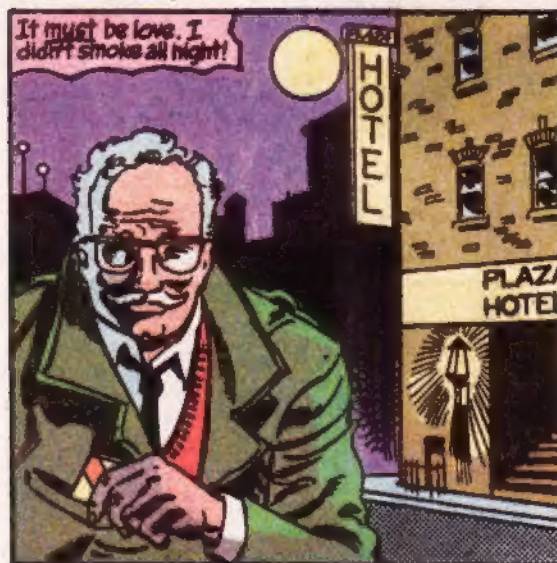
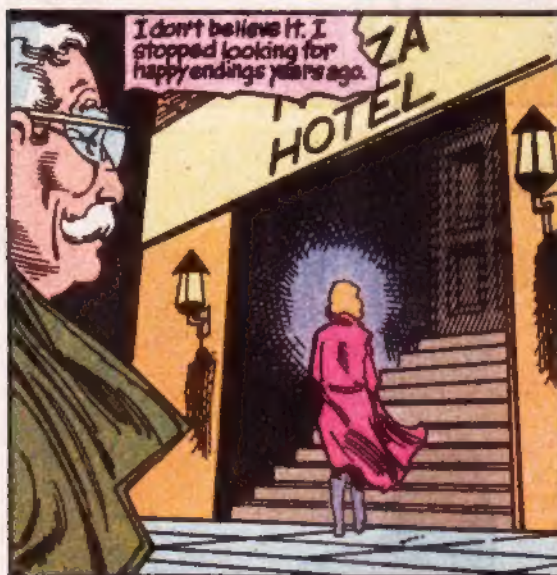
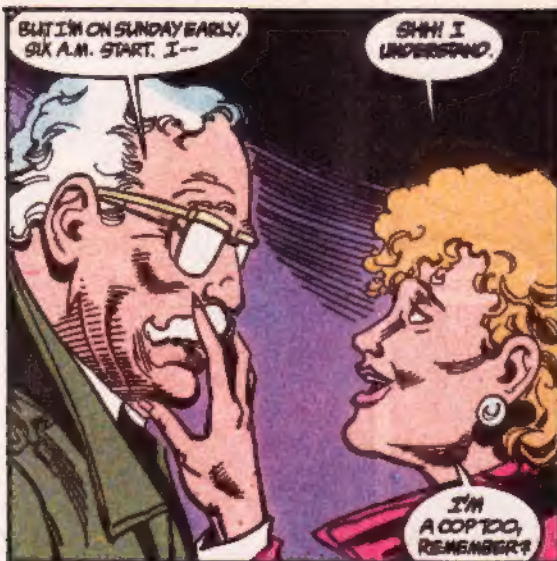
ALREADY ON ITS WAY, SIR



YOU'RE OFF-DUTY, AREN'T YOU, SIR? WHY DON'T YOU GO ENJOY YOUR SATURDAY NIGHT?

GOOD ADVICE, OFFICER! COME ON, JIM!





Monday, I quit
this filthy habit
forev--

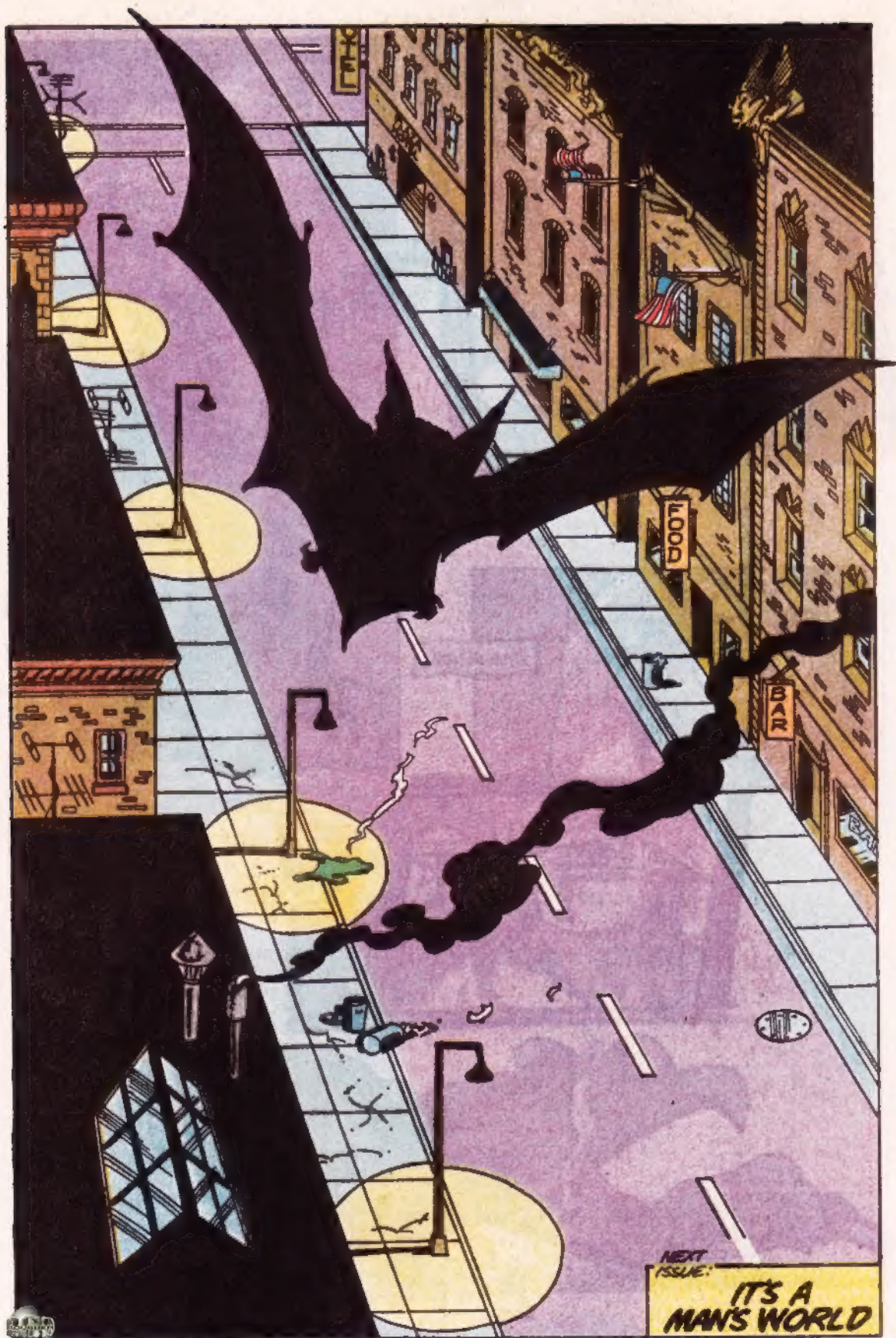
My heart...!

NO! Not now!
I'm due the
happy ending!

Please! Not...

NOW...!





NEXT
ISSUE:

**IT'S A
MAN'S WORLD**

BAT-SIGNALS

DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

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L-5904

Dear Mr. O'Neil,

Wow! BATMAN #455 was extraordinary! Page 8 took my breath away! The people Tim Drake cares for most, Batman and Nightwing, are lowering his mother's casket into the grave. What a powerful image—it really shook me. Norm Breyfogle's use of shadow is very effective.

I also liked the last panel on page 13. Looking at Bruce and Tim through the case holding Robin's costume, after all that has transpired, can only portend future events!

I always enjoy reading Batman. Alan Grant and Norm Breyfogle are proving to be as dynamic a duo as...

K. Zide
(address withheld by request)

Dear KC,

The arrival of the ex-TEC team on the BATMAN title has been announced in spectacular style with the first part of the "Identity Crisis" storyline. The two storylines—the Scarecrow-driven killers and Tim's assault on the Robin identity—both make compelling viewing. When the normal becomes abnormal, as has happened with the little-old-lady killer, that's where horror begins. We assume Vicki won't fall victim to the axe, but once again, many lives are being lost, and once again, Batman has to play the role of avenger, rather than lifesaver, a sickeningly familiar dirge.

As for Tim, we know he'll eventually have to become Robin, and so does Batman. And Bruce knows he'll never, ever consider anyone 'ready' again. Like Carrie Kelley, it seems Tim will have to take matters into his own hands. Having said that, if I were Batman, I wouldn't even consider the idea of taking a young adolescent into situations where loss of limb or life was a distinct possibility. Batman's had years of experience, and has the strength and power of a grown adult, and even then still comes close to being killed not infrequently. So won't a Robin, any Robin, inevitably either be made a casualty, or cause Batman to take unnecessary risks himself to protect him, eventually? Maybe the role of Robin is to take over the cowl and cape himself when Batman is forced to relinquish that identity himself through age or infirmity? A unique way of entering the family business!

The art looked even better than usual from this pair, and a little different, no doubt due to Kevin's 'assist'; Batman looked positively borrowed from Kane & Finger in places!

Malcolm Bourne
2 & 4 Bye Road
Shuttleworth, Ramabottom
Bury, Lancashire BL0 0HH
ENGLAND

Norm and his brother Kevin have this arcane way of working together involving breakdowns, enlargements, chicken blood, and eye of newt.

Dear Denny,

Please give Robin his own series, graphic novel, 3-D book, movie, TV show, novels, posters (a lot of them!), and of course an art book: "How to Draw Robin"!

Christoph Weiss
Johannagasse 29/177
A 1050 Vienna
AUSTRIA

Dear Denny,

I usually find that quotations on comics splash pages serve more to impress the reader with the writer's literary knowledge than to add to the story. The one in BATMAN #455 certainly didn't fall into this category.

The whole thrust of the comic was masks and identity. We know that Bruce Wayne releases the dark side of his personality when he dons the "Bat-mask"; however, knowing this, he is afraid of Tim Drake's donning a mask and getting drawn into the Batman's world.

As a contrast to this we find that even when the masked villains of this issue are unmasked it only reveals their identities, leaving their motives and the cause of their actions still unknown. Alan Grant's choice of quotation to start this issue neatly summed up the fact that a mask is as much a psychological barrier as it is a physical one.

Martin Simcox
84 Barnett Lane
Wordsley, Stourbridge
West Midlands DY8 6PX
ENGLAND

Cover: Offhand, I'd say that marriage is off to a shaky start! HA! Pg. 3: Beating up on old ladies now, are we, Bats? Those homeless look familiar! Weren't they part of the Anarky plotline? Pg. 6: With all the publicity Gotham's costumed homicidal maniacs get, I guess it was only a matter of time until the general populace got into the act! Pg. 8: Why does it have to mean something, Drake? Life is hard, and then you die! It's Nature's joke on us all! The Obese Man is still alive? The kid is right: "It isn't fair!" Pg. 19: Why is it I get the impression Tim WILL "put on the suit" before all this is over?? Did Tim ever tell Bruce about his catching Anarky?? Pg. 22: Curiosity killed the cat! I hope the same won't be said about Vicki! I suspect Bats will be putting in an appearance shortly, to save the day! That reminds me, have you guys seen *Mighty Mouse* #1?? What with New Warriors emulating New Titans, Marvel is sincerely flattering you guys, eh?

Robert Kowalski
3878 Garvin Street
Detroit, MI 48212

Well, Robert, if you're gonna borrow...borrow from the best.

NEXT ISSUE: Batman and Joe Potato go after a white slavery ring! Also, what do you get when you put Sarah Essen, Vicki Vale, and Catwoman together in a museum after hours? TROUBLE! Be here in thirty for "It's a Man's World" by Alan Grant, Norm Breyfogle, and guest inker Tim Sale.

—Kelley Puckett
assistant to the stars

From the Den



Very comic-booky night last night. I read, in one sitting, *Hellblazer* numbers 16 through 22, a series written by Jamie Delano with art by Richard Piers Rayner, Mark Buckingham, Mike Hoffman, and Alfredo Alcala. Taken as a whole, these seven issues form a novel, and a helluva one it is, too.

But it's not traditional comic book fare. The hero—I'm tempted to call him an anti-hero—bears little resemblance to the usual good guy, and his adventures are darker and more disturbing than what we American comics readers are used to. Apart from a few occult plot elements, the novel is grimly realistic (and I know and respect people who would argue that the kind of occultism the novel dramatizes is realistic, too.)

A half-decade or so ago, *Hellblazer* would have been a mountain-size exception in the world of comics. Now, well done though it is, it represents the kind of material that's becoming almost commonplace.

It's interesting to read *Hellblazer* and the newly-published *Superman Archives II* (a collection of very early Superman stories) in the same week and realize just how much American comics have evolved in 50 years. Comics have, in that half-century, recapitulated the history of literature: they've gone from tales of good and evil with an emphasis on basic shared values and endings that emphasize the triumph of a hero who represents those values to stories in which the hero is a loner who must create his own value system and whose triumphs happen largely within his own soul. From tribal storytellers sitting around the campfire to John Updike in just five decades.

This is neither good nor bad. It just is. The nice thing is that we have a choice: we can still sit around the campfire or we can duck inside somewhere and open up our Updike. Both the storytellers and the Updikes are among us, and they're equally active.

And we can heed their stories and wonder what will happen next.

DENNY